

Scenography, Setting and Ethical World in *Jogo de Cena* [Scene Game]: A Discursive Approach / *Cenografia, agenciamento e mundo ético na entrevista em Jogo de cena: uma abordagem discursiva*

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ABSTRACT

Among Eduardo Coutinho's vast production, the documentary *Jogo de cena* (2007) stands out and is celebrated as being the centerpiece of the filmmaker's filmography, in which the interviews occupy a central place. The purpose of this article is to reflect upon these interviews, discursively, based on: speech scenes put in perspective and in relation to the aesthetic choices and materiality of the documentary; nature of the interviewer-interviewee relationship, marked by the refusal of an "alleged neutrality" and the production of settings, scenographies, and ethical worlds. For this, we articulated basic concepts of Discourse Analysis, as theorized by Dominique Maingueneau, such as interdiscourse, scenography, setting and discursive *ethos*. The results demonstrate that it is possible to establish a dialogue between Coutinho's methodological apparatus and concepts of Discourse Analysis. From a mystical aura of his welcoming silence, the interviewer's respectful and considerate *ethos* in relation to the characters' speeches can be inferred.

KEYWORDS: Discourse Analysis; Documentary; Setting; Scenography; Discursive *ethos*

RESUMO

Entre a vasta produção de Eduardo Coutinho, destaca-se o documentário Jogo de cena (2007), celebrado como "objeto solar" da filmografia do cineasta, no qual a entrevista ocupa um lugar central. O objetivo deste artigo é refletir discursivamente sobre ela a partir de cenas de fala postas a circular em relação às escolhas estéticas e à materialidade do documentário; natureza da relação entrevistador-entrevistadas, marcada pela recusa a uma "suposta neutralidade" e produção de agenciamentos, cenografias e mundo ético. Para isso, são acionados conceitos basilares da Análise do Discurso, como interdiscurso, cenografia, agenciamento e ethos discursivo, conforme formulados por Dominique Maingueneau. Os resultados mostram que é possível estabelecer diálogos profícuos com os dispositivos metodológicos de Coutinho e conceitos da Análise do Discurso. A partir de uma aura mística do seu silêncio acolhedor, pode-se depreender um ethos respeitoso e atencioso do entrevistador em relação às falas das personagens.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Análise do discurso; Documentário; Agenciamento; Cenas de enunciação; Ethos discursivo

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Introduction

The interview occupies a central place in the documentary *Jogo de cena* (2007), by Eduardo Coutinho, considered the “solar object,” the centerpiece, of his filmography. Already used by the filmmaker in previous works, the interview reaches its apogee in this film, as it deepens the experience of language, releasing inventiveness, fabulation and self-staging. Such practice is also called by Coutinho as “conversation, relationship with the other.”

The aim of this article is to reflect on how this interview is constituted from the i/ scenes of speech put into circulation; ii/ nature of the interviewer-interviewee relationship and iii/ production of settings, scenography and ethical world involved in the interviews conducted by Coutinho. The theoretical framework chosen is that of the Discourse Analysis (DA), based on the concepts of interdiscourse, scene of enunciation (scenography) and discursive *ethos* (Maingueneau, 2008a; 2008b; 2008c), as well as a more recent one, that of setting (*agencement* in French) (Maingueneau, 2020).

It should be noted that, since its beginnings in the 1960s, DA has taken part in the reflections upon discursivities, with a discursive plan that articulates language and society, interwoven by the ideological context, in order to consolidate an alternative analysis, even if marginal, to that of the traditional perspective advocated by Content Analysis. Thus, by postulating that discourses are permanently subjected to the possibility of equivocation and incomprehension and that human interactions are marked by opacity and by the multiple effects of meaning, the DA promotes “a theoretical broadening, another possibility, originated from a different perspective on language practices” (Rocha; Deusdará, 2005, p.308).¹

The underlying premises of a discourse analysis strongly refuse a supposed transparency of the language, a fully reasoned subject, a rigorous and objective method, as well as the *a priori* apprehension of meanings by an interpretative practice of systematization, reduction of heterogeneities and containment of the dispersion of subjects by a neutral researcher.

¹ In Portuguese: “um alargamento teórico, uma possibilidade outra, originada de um olhar diferenciado sobre as práticas languageiras.”

In accordance with such discursive perspective, the notions of transparency and opacity are also questioned on the level of filmic materiality, for

When the apparatus is hidden in favor of a greater gain of illusionism, the operation is called ‘transparency.’ When the apparatus is revealed to the viewers, enabling an increase of detachment and criticism, the operation is called ‘opacity’ (Xavier, 2008, p.6).²

In this sense, *Jogo de cena* materializes the conditions that allow the destabilization of the regimes of truth with which documentaries work, and it assumes, on the contrary, a different perspective regarding the film editing process, in order to think about the production of open universes, produced in the act of filming and from which a reflection on the images of the world and its forms of representation emerges (Comolli, 2008).

This study is justified given the importance of documentary as a film genre for the interpellation of the contemporary man, its identification with certain positions of subjectivity constructed by the film, as well as a clearer understanding of the audiovisual media and the technological apparatus in the production of filmic events of this nature, since the interest in “reality” has been accentuated in various forms of artistic and mediatic expression, as in the production of an aesthetic of a documentary content in TV shows and journalism, such as long takes, shaky-cam and low-resolution images recorded by micro cameras, surveillance cameras, amateur cameras and mobile phones, which imprint an “effect of reality” to their productions (Lins; Mesquita, 2008).

Regarding DA, an undertaking of this nature is relevant due to the lack of research that focuses on the theme of documentary cinematography, through a full-fledged theoretical and methodological apparatus within Humanities and Social Sciences, a set of approaches that intends to elaborate concepts and methods based on the empirical properties of discursive activities (Maingueneau, 2006).

Finally, the “discursive view” that considers Coutinho’s methodological apparatus of which the interview is part, allows the drawing of attention to the work activity of the

² In Portuguese: “Quando o dispositivo é ocultado em favor de um ganho maior de ilusionismo, a operação se diz de ‘transparência’. Quando o dispositivo é revelado ao espectador, possibilitando um ganho de distanciamento e crítica, a operação se diz de ‘opacidade’.”

researcher-interviewer, by taking as its centerpiece the interaction and the production of the enunciative scenes in which both are enrolled. It is, therefore, an operation that admits and apprehends the subject in the fabric of social and cultural relations, always interpellated by ideology and affected by the unconscious.

In the following sections, we present some aspects of the discursive operation of Coutinho's filmic apparatus in *Jogo de cena*, in which the interview plays a central role. We then present the aforementioned DA concepts. Finally, we proceed to the analysis of a scene starring the actress Fernanda Torres, in which we operate the notions of enunciation scenes, setting, and discursive *ethos*.

1 The Rules of the Game: Coutinho's Filmic Apparatus

Apparatus is this: my films start by stating that a film crew went somewhere, it's always like that, I don't live in the *Babilônia favela* [Babylon Slum], I don't live in Santa Marta, I don't live in the Master Building. So, the movie always starts with the rules of the game. The game is the movie and the rules are these: in the Northeast, in a *favela* or in a building, there is a crew, there is a time and we will see what happens. This is given from the start, it's always a movie, it's not the life in the favela. It's not a movie about religion in the *favela*. It's a movie about the film crew that goes to the *favela* hills to talk about religiosity.
*Eduardo Coutinho*³

Apparatus, or “prison” – as defined by Coutinho himself – was the term used to refer to his filming procedures, and it can be understood as a set of formal rules and boundaries of time and space, which the documentary filmmaker imposes on oneself for the making of films, in order to achieve a minimalist aesthetic and an ethical constraint, in which “the interviewee's discourse becomes the centerpiece of their language activity,

³ In Portuguese: “Dispositivo é isso, meus filmes começam dizendo que uma equipe de cinema foi a algum lugar, é sempre assim, eu não moro na favela Babilônia, não moro no Santa Marta, eu não moro no Master. Então, sempre o filme começa com as regras do jogo. O jogo é o filme e as regras são essas: no Nordeste, numa favela ou num prédio, tem uma equipe, tem um tempo e vamos ver o que acontece. Isso é dado inicialmente, sempre se trata de um filme, não é a vida na favela. Não é um filme sobre a religião na favela. É um filme sobre a equipe de cinema que vai ao morro conversar sobre religiosidade.”

someone's speech about their own experience, without the cliché related to their social condition" (Xavier, 2013, p.181).⁴

In *Jogo de cena*, Coutinho suppresses some tools traditionally associated with the filmic activity, such as the synchronism between image and sound, the absence of soundtrack and voice-over narration (overlying sounds that are not originally from those image takes), as well as B-roll images, paving the way for the contemporary documentary. Until then, in the so-called classic documentary, the prevailing voice was that of a speaker who did not find one's origin in the experience; on the contrary, it was a voice-over or "the voice of God" that narrated the facts, according to what the image displayed. The speaker was not seen in the scene, as he belonged to another unspecified universe of sound and image, "dissolving the individual in the statistics that say of the interviewees things that they do not know about themselves" (Bernardet, 2003, p.16).⁵

In this tradition (the 1950s), that voice used to come from the so-called "discourses of sobriety" (science, education, economics, politics etc.), which were legitimized on the basis of a speech authorization and power authority (Nichols, 2016). The interviewees only spoke when asked and, when they did, it was to exemplify what was being discussed in the film, through a "voice of experience" that highlighted some aspect of their lives (routine, work, living conditions etc.). In other words,

What informs the viewer about the "real" is the speaker, because from the interviewees we only get an individual and fragmented story - at least, when taking the concept of real as an abstract and broad construction. A relationship is then established between the interviewees and the speaker: they are the experience about which they provide immediate information, the general, social, deep meaning of the experience and they do not have access to this (in the film); the speaker elaborates, outside the experience, observing the surface data of the experience, and provides us with the deep meaning (Bernardet, 2003, p.17).⁶

⁴ In Portuguese: "o discurso do entrevistado passa a ser o centro de sua atividade de linguagem, a fala de alguém sobre sua própria experiência, sem os clichês relativos à sua condição social."

⁵ In Portuguese: "dissolvendo o indivíduo na estatística que diz dos entrevistados coisas que eles não sabem a seu próprio respeito."

⁶ In Portuguese: "O que informa o espectador sobre o 'real' é o locutor, pois dos entrevistados só obtemos uma história individual e fragmentada – pelo menos, quando se concebe o real como uma construção abstrata e abrangente. Estabelece-se então uma relação entre os entrevistados e o locutor: eles são a experiência sobre a qual fornecem informações imediatas, o sentido geral, social, profundo da experiência e isso eles não têm acesso (no filme); o locutor elabora, de fora da experiência a partir dos dados da superfície da experiência, e nos fornece o significado profundo."

It was only from the 1960s on that documentaries began to incorporate dialogues, through testimonies and interviews, as a way to guarantee a status of truth to what was being said, a status which would characterize the tele-journalistic and the documentary genres.

Thereby, Eduardo Coutinho would become a noticeable filmmaker of this period. However, he went further, starting to work with life stories of ordinary, anonymous people from economically less favored classes, as well as conducting the interviews progressively through increasingly personalized procedures. He was mostly guided by the adoption of a geographical and spatial apparatus, a kind of creative prison that valued the present of the take and aimed to prevent the film from incurring in generalizations (Lins, 2004).

By exploring the oral testimonies to their limit, the filmmaker conceived the interview in a unique way, making the interviewee feel more comfortable and willing to open up. As for the treatment of images – the camera was fixed on the interviewee, alternating only the field size of the shots – with a fixed set-up, single focus on their speeches, almost no soundtrack, voice-over or outdoor takes.

After that process, and with his full crew on the scene, the interview began. The filmmaker initially cared to show the interviewee that he had already been informed about interesting events of the interviewee's life. One of the possibilities he used was to refer to some previous event, asking for more details about it.

Perceiving that there was a special interest in his account, the interviewee made an effort to tell it with vivacity, in a state of co-presence, in which a deep partnership between the interlocutors was registered. The speech that emerges from that interaction turns itself into an unrepeatable, unique event, associated with a minimalist aesthetic, marked by the setting of a few visual elements on the scene.

These will be present in the actual act of filming: the camera fixed on the character, with minimal framing changes – between the medium shot and the close-up – through zooming: the chair for the interviewee composed with a neutral background, the microphone, the black cloth, the empty theater, all used to integrate the scene, in which the positions of the documentarian and the character were previously marked, with no outside images to illustrate what was being said.

What would produce multiple meanings would be the radical stripping away of the superfluous, the act of concentration around the power of the word. This editing option was based on the belief that the word would be the most visceral element. When an image appeared, it could not be considered an illustration of what was being said, a proof, it also needed to tell something. Thus, the image, when selected for the film could not be adjective (Figuerôa; Bezerra; Fechine, 2003).

The crew and the technique had the function of favoring the interaction, the dialogue, the negotiation, and Coutinho took care of eliminating the elements that had disturbed the possibilities of his characters' narration in previous films.

The camera, for instance, should not move during conversations, which should last from 40 minutes to an hour; a second camera would record the interview, and there would still be sound technicians, light technicians and other crew members, creating a disorganized order or an unstable organized disorder that could break at any moment (Lins, 2004).

Some of these features can be seen in Table 1 below:

Features	Description
Place and time framework	Strict definition of when the film begins and ends.
Suppression of traditional tools	Narration, cutaway, script, plot, camera movement direction, camera presence, director's movement. Non-diegetic soundtrack. Fixed framing setup.
Minimal definition of the environment	Progressive disappearance of visual elements. Minimalist aesthetic. Few objects from the scene present in the shooting act. Character in interaction with object-images. Black cloth, two chairs. Simple lighting.
Positioning of the filmmaker and of the character	Filmmaker sitting waiting for the character, both with demarcated positions. No movement throughout the scene. The film takes place in this environment, with the character and Coutinho in the same positions. Focus on interviewees' faces.
Absence of illustration images	Suppression of illustration images as evidence elements. What is being said is not illustrated.

Features	Description
Ethical determinant	Essence of the encounter presided over by a strict ethical stance (what can and cannot be done) regarding the lives of the characters.
Indistinction between fiction and reality	Fiction produces something real and true. One does not try to prove that what is being said is true.
Embodied knowledge	Irruption of the order of the past, experienced not as knowledge, but as embodiment. The speech is not about an idea, it's something incarnated.
Order given by chance	The order of the characters derives from chance, without predetermined places. Life overflows the film.
Incompleteness	Cinema without conclusion. Film without ending.
Co-presence	Encounter resulted from the partnership between who asks and who answers.

Table 1 - Summary table of the method in Coutinho⁷

Source: own elaboration.

In the next section, we present some concepts from Discourse Analysis, such as scenes of enunciation (scenography), discursive *ethos*, and setting, that were developed by Dominique Maingueneau (2020; 2008a; 2008b; 2008c), which relate to Eduardo Coutinho's *modus operandi* in his filmic apparatus.

2 Interdiscourse, Scenography, Setting and Ethical World in the Interview in *Jogo de cena*

Jogo de cena (2007), considered a milestone in his filmography, is the tenth feature-length documentary by Eduardo Coutinho. The film takes place entirely on the stage of *Teatro Glauce Rocha* [Theater Glauber Rocha], in Rio de Janeiro, in which the filmmaker heard unknown women about their lives, but also famous actresses, who performed the testimonies in a process of enunciative mirroring, by shuffling and/or

⁷ Characteristics of Coutinho's documentary film presented in a Masterclass lecture, taught by João Moreira Salles, in October 2019, at *Itaú Cultural em São Paulo* [Cultural Itaú in São Paulo], at the 47th edition of the Occupation Program – Eduardo Coutinho – Exhibition of the *Instituto Itaú Cultural* [Itaú Cultural Institute]. The event aimed to present to the public the life of the honored artist, his trajectory, creation process, and work.

duplicating the speeches of those ordinary women with their own, thus leading viewers into an unstable territory of doubt about the authenticity of the accounts.

In the film, there are three layers of representation, namely:

- 1) Unknown women tell stories about their lives.
- 2) Famous actresses narrate such stories as if they were their own.
- 3) Famous actresses narrate the stories of their lives, mixing them with those of the unknown women.

The interviews in *Jogo de cena* had as a major premise the need for the interviewer to abstain from any moral judgment when faced with the words of the people being filmed, allowing the self-portraits of these interactions not to be related to sociological typologies, statistics, or possible theses of the director about the filmic universe in which he was inserted. Hence the importance of filming in a restricted space, geographically and temporally situated, in a single location and, from that place, evoking what would be a “general” view, but not necessarily representing a single worldview.

Adopting the form of a “conversational cinema,” I chose to be fed by the speech-view of unique events and people, immersed in the contingency of life. With that, I eliminated, as far as possible, the universe of general ideas, with which it is difficult to make a good cinema, documentary or not, and the “types” immediately and coherently symbolic of a social class, a group, a nation, a culture. The improvisation, the chance, the friendly relationship, sometimes conflictful, between the interlocutors arranged, in theory, on both sides of the camera – this is the essential food of the documentary I try to make (Coutinho apud Ohata, 2013, p.16).⁸

With the full crew on the scene, the interview began. The filmmaker informed his interviewee that he had already had access to information, to interesting facts about her life, as a result of previous research carried out by the film’s production team. One of the possibilities at hand was to recall one of those previous events, asking for more details

⁸ In Portuguese: “Adotando a forma de um “cinema de conversação”, escolhi ser alimentado pela fala-olhar de acontecimentos e pessoas singulares, mergulhadas na contingência da vida. Eliminei, com isso, até onde fosse possível, o universo das ideias gerais, com as quais dificilmente se faz um bom cinema, documentário ou não, e dos “tipos” imediata e coerentemente simbólicos de uma classe social, de um grupo, de uma nação, de uma cultura. O improvisado, o acaso, a relação amigável, às vezes conflituosa, entre os conversadores dispostos, em tese, dos dois lados da câmera – esse é o alimento essencial do documentário que procuro fazer.”

about them. In this way, a network of previous formulations was established, a speech recollection that recovered a past event and linked it to the present moment, a game of retakes by the “anticipations we make of what we think our interlocutor thinks and will say” (Lins, 2004, p.108).⁹

It is possible to perceive that, when inscribing the interview in this game of retakes of previous speeches, the filmmaker was already acting under the aegis of interdiscourse, a central concept of Discourse Analysis, which postulates that the speeches are not born out of themselves, but are related to a long previous chain of discourses already produced and that would maintain relations with each other.

There are instigating similarities between the work developed by discourse analysts and the work done by Eduardo Coutinho in *Jogo de cena*. Exploring the similarities and/or resonances that are established between these two fields of knowledge is what we propose to do, more specifically, by developing a discursive point of view on the documentary based on some concepts of Discourse Analysis.

Assuming that interdiscourse has primacy over discourse means considering that the unit of analysis with which the discourse analyst works is not the discourses themselves, but the interdiscursive relationship that is established between them, always conceived in a dialogical relationship, that is, embedded in its genesis. In this movement, one starts to consider the existence of an interdiscursive memory (Maingueneau, 2008a).

From the beginning, the interview in *Jogo de cena* asserts itself as a space for exchanges between discourses, that is, it is where it takes place. And it will be in this space that effects of meaning concerning the other will be produced, as well as concerning the full dedication to the narrated experiences and, mainly, to the non-judgment of what is being said. “This is where a radical identity is defined between character construction and conversation, other resources being discarded” (Xavier, 2013, p.180).¹⁰

Still from the discourse perspective, the notion of scene of enunciation is constantly used to refer to the way in which the discourse constructs a representation of its own situation of enunciation, with which it intends to convince its interlocutors. For this to happen, a tripartite scene framework is produced, namely: the encompassing scene,

⁹ In Portuguese: “antecipações que fazemos do que achamos que pensa e vai dizer nosso interlocutor.”

¹⁰ In Portuguese: “Aí se define uma identidade radical entre construção de personagem e conversa, outros recursos sendo descartados.”

the generic scene, and the scenography. The encompassing scene gives its pragmatic status to the enunciation; it is integrated into a type of discourse, a sphere of activity. The generic scene is that of the constitutive norms of a genre or subgenre of discourse: the editorial, the sermon, the travel guide, the medical consultation, for instance. As for the scenography, it is not imposed by the genre, but constructed by the text itself: a sermon can only be enunciated through a magisterial, prophetic, friendly scenography etc. Usually, the scenography must be legitimized or re-legitimized by the very enunciation that relies on it, because, according to Maingueneau (2020), the universe constructed by the enunciation must specify and validate the scenography through which it emerges.

Two figures (those of the enunciator and of the co-enunciator) relate to each other in a scenography, by means of a chronography and a topography. Those coordinates of time and place define the space from which the discourse will be delivered, which implies a paradoxical entanglement: the enunciation as it develops, strives to institute its own speech apparatus.

In the case of Coutinho's conversation with the women, the encompassing scene is the one that corresponds to the type of discourse ("the cinematographic discourse"), the generic scene is the one that refers to the genre used ("the documentary"). Those two layers define the background scene space. However, the viewer is not directly faced with it, but rather with a scenography, which presupposes a speech situation that is progressively validated through the enunciation itself, since: "the scenography is thus both the source of the discourse and what it engenders; it legitimizes an enunciation that, in its turn, must legitimize it, establishing that this scenography is the scenography to enunciate as it suits" (Maingueneau, 2013, p.98).¹¹

As interaction partners, Coutinho and his interviewees are inscribed in the first two scenes, already crossed by the questioning of the status of truth (non-fictional character) that traditionally defines the documentary. At the same time, those two levels of constraint will condition a third scene, the scenography, which is the one that will occupy the center of apparatus. Indeed,

¹¹ In Portuguese: "a cenografia é, assim, ao mesmo tempo a fonte do discurso e aquilo que ele engendra; ela legitima um enunciado que, por sua vez, deve legitimá-la, estabelecendo que esta cenografia é a cenografia para enunciar como convém."

(...) to speak up means, to varying degrees, to take a risk; the scenography is not a frame, a scenario, as if the discourse appeared unexpectedly within a space already constructed and independent of it: it is the enunciation that, as it develops, strives to progressively constitute its own speech apparatus (Maingueneau, 2013, p.98).¹²

The interviews construct scenographies of intense relationships, painful separations, problems with children, with parents, death, pain and mourning, among other burning issues of human experience which are present in the speech scenes in which the filmmaker is enrolled, in a sensitive listening attitude, reaffirming a greater identification with what may seem insignificant, forgotten and rejected by official history and the media. It is “the lives of infamous men,” without fame, that interests the documentarian and that he captures in his incursions through these staged lives (Lins, 2004, p.181).

Coutinho, in particular, knows like few others how to work within this premise to compose a scenario of empathy and inclusion that is based on a philosophy of the encounter that is not difficult to formulate in theory, but whose realization is rare. It requires an effective opening for dialogue (which is not enough to program), the talent and experience that make it possible to compose the scene capable of making happen what would not be possible without the presence of the camera. The well-known catalyzing effect of cinema’s view in the gestation of unexpected speech must reach its maximum power, in order to compensate for the asymmetry of powers (Xavier, 2013, p.181).¹³

Concomitantly with the *here* and *now* of the enunciative act, an image of oneself is produced in the act of enunciation, that is, a discursive *ethos*. Studying the *ethos* means relying on simple, intuitive data that is coextensive with all use of language, since the receiver constructs a representation of the speaker from what he says and the way he says it. There is, then, an evaluated representation, since speaking is an activity supported by supposedly shared values (Maingueneau, 2020).

¹² In Portuguese: “(...) tomar a palavra significa, em graus variados, assumir um risco; a cenografia não é um quadro, um cenário, como se o discurso aparecesse inesperadamente no interior de um espaço já construído e independente dele: é a enunciação que, ao se desenvolver, esforça-se para constituir progressivamente o seu próprio dispositivo de fala.”

¹³ Coutinho, em particular, sabe como poucos trabalhar dentro dessa premissa para compor um cenário de empatia e inclusão que se apoia numa filosofia do encontro que não é difícil formular em teoria, mas cuja realização é rara. Ela exige a abertura efetiva para o diálogo (que não basta programar), o talento e a experiência que permitam compor a cena apta a fazer com que aconteça o que não seria possível sem a presença da câmara. O conhecido efeito catalizador do olhar do cinema na gestação da fala inesperada deve chegar à sua potência máxima, de modo a compensar a assimetria dos poderes.

This dimension of verbal activity has been highlighted since Greek antiquity, especially in Aristotle's Rhetoric, for whom the proof by *ethos* consisted in making a good impression, in giving an image of oneself capable of convincing the audience by gaining their trust. This proof mobilizes everything that, in the enunciation, contributes to cast and shape the image of the speaker. In other words,

Voice tone, speech rhythm, vocabulary selection and arguments, gestures, facial expression, gaze, posture, costume etc. are equally signs, elocutionary and oratorical signs, clothing and symbolic signs, through which the speaker gives a psychological and sociological image of himself (Declercq, 1992 *apud* Maingueneau, 2020, p.10).¹⁴

The discursive *ethos* projected by the enunciator and captured by the addressee is thus closely related to what gives corporality to the guarantor, that gives it a body; and also closely related to the assimilation of a set of schemes which correspond to a specific way of relating to the world and to the constitution of a body, that of the imaginary community of those who adhere to the same discourse, manifesting from this relationship an incorporation that takes place through the assimilation of a subjective instance that manifests itself through a historically specified enunciating body, considered as a guarantor that, by his tone, attests what is being said (Maingueneau, 2020).

Coutinho's *ethos* of welcoming, attention and respect for the speech of his interviewees is the mark of his positioning in the documentary field and is what gives him adherence to his discourse. Coutinho projects himself as someone who knows how to listen, allowing the interviewees the feeling that they are producing their own rhythm of speech, generously supported by the figure of someone who allows the moment to be dense in revelations, surprises, hesitations, unpredictable gestures. This is because, "by speaking, what a speaker does, then, is to put his image on the line and try to guide, more or less consciously and in a direction that is favorable to him, the interpretation and evaluation of the signs he sends to the receiver" (Maingueneau, 2020, p.9).¹⁵

¹⁴ In Portuguese: "Tom de voz, ritmo da fala, seleção vocabular e argumentos, gestos, expressão facial, olhar, postura, figurino etc. são igualmente signos, elocutórios e oratórios, indumentários e simbólicos, pelos quais o orador dá de si mesmo uma imagem psicológica e sociológica."

¹⁵ In Portuguese: "ao tomar a palavra, o que um locutor faz, então, é pôr em risco sua imagem e tentar orientar, mais ou menos conscientemente e em um sentido que lhe seja favorável, a interpretação e a avaliação dos signos que envia ao destinatário."

In *Jogo de cena*, the interviewer-guarantor guarantees the speeches of his interviewees, through a body that moves in the chair, marked by verbal and non-verbal attributes: silence, low voice, long pauses, few verbal utterances, a certain inflection of voice, a gaze oblique to the frame in which it is captured in the act of “giving voice to the other.” This incorporation of the addressee implies an ethical world in which the guarantor actively participates (Maingueneau, 2000).

This other with whom Coutinho relates, as Lins (2004, p.108) notes, is no longer the object of the documentary, but the subject of the film. It is not “the other of a class,” but “the source of the discourse, the center of the world.” Coutinho does not want to give voice or be spokesperson for anyone, because that presupposes a truth about the other to be revealed in the film, ready to be extracted by the filmmaker. This is not what he wants, especially because there is no way to give voice to the other, since the word is not essentially “of the other.”

The filmmaker engages in conversations “with others” and not “about others.” In his filmic productions, a kind of celebration of the incarnated and shared word stands out, a word that does not belong only to the one who emits it, but also to the one who receives it, to whom it was destined. The ethical world established by the encounter with the other is a territory of interaction shared in a state of co-presence, that is, “a kind of fine partnership between interviewer and interviewee, from which a point of view emerges, a positioning” (Lins, 2004, p.108).¹⁶

Contributing to the production of effects of meaning there is the setting of the scene with few objects present in the act of filming. The concept of setting refers to the elements that do not derive from the verbal register, but that participate in the scene (scenery, equipment, etc.), assuming the same sense that the term “scenography” has in theater: art and study of organization, assembly of the scene (Maingueneau, 2020, p.142).

According to the French theorist, setting and scenography are not independent, on the contrary, the former may restrict, in a more or less strong way, the scenographies developed from it. In this sense, the minimalist setting proposed by Coutinho, an almost “Franciscan” one, with few objects in the scene, becomes the vector that favors

¹⁶ In Portuguese: “uma espécie de fina parceria entre entrevistador-entrevistado, da qual emerge um ponto de vista, um posicionamento.”

scenographies that express a high degree of valorization of the word and are transmuted into unique and major events.

The setting of the space where Coutinho will listen to the interviewees is clearly demarcated as follows: (i) the filmmaker occupies a fixed place in the produced scene and not outside it; (ii) the statements are taken on the stage of an empty theater, traditionally associated with a space of fiction; (iii) the conversations take place on an empty stage, slightly illuminated, inhabited by the dual presence of the interviewer and the interviewee, inviting to the loosening of tensions and of startled feelings; (iv) the microphone, although discreet, remains visible in the scene, offering itself to the desire of those who want to reveal themselves; (v) a camera remains fixed, framing the face of the interviewees, a place of thought and emotion, as well as it operates the ordering of the few objects on the empty stage of the theater, highlighting the chairs where the partners of the interaction are installed; (vi) a second camera records the interview, with the presence of sound technicians, light technicians and other crew members, creating a disorganized order or an unstable organized disorder that could break at any moment (LINS, 2004).

3 An Interview in Which “*Coutinho’s Rigor Is Not That of the Engineer, but That of the Jazz Musician*”

The statement that gives the title to this section was made by João Moreira Salles and it is included in the preface to *O documentário de Eduardo Coutinho [Eduardo Coutinho’s Documentary]*, by Consuelo Lins (2004), a work dedicated to reflecting on the filmography of the filmmaker, highlighting its main characteristics.

Salles relates Coutinho’s work to that of the jazz musician in its aspect of having rules for improvisation rather than the act of improvising. A proof of that is the fact that he dedicated himself, in each new work, to go deeper in the questions of method, not in a purely theoretical way, but through camera movements, framing, cuts, ways of articulating takes. In his words, “it is an incarnated theory, consubstantial to practice.”

We highlight, henceforth, a discursive practice of the filmmaker, in which it is possible to perceive how much Coutinho “embodies” his apparatus. This is the interview that Coutinho did with Fernanda Torres, an actress well known to the public and invited

to stage the speech of Aleta, a young woman marked by the early failure of some of her personal projects, due to tragic events: a sick mother, an unexpected and inconvenient pregnancy, love disappointments, and professional frustration.

Aleta enters the scene narrating a life marked by disappointment and mismatch between dreams and reality. Then it is Fernanda Torres' turn to play Aleta, but the experience seems to fail. Fernanda incurs in some mismatches between the real and the staged, materialized in her own discourse, when she moves it into the territory of her own interpretation:

The difference is that, with a fictional character, if you reach a mediocre level you can even stay on it because it is of your own measure. With a real character, reality kind of rubs in your face where you could be and where you didn't get to... There's a finished other right in front of you. (...) Other times, interpreting fiction, interpreting a character that doesn't exist, you achieve a certain degree of reality, and that person then comes into existence.¹⁷

The mix of feelings between the actress and the character Aleta is, disconcertingly, shared with Coutinho, who shows sympathy for the actress in difficulty. According to Lins (2004, p.8), “face to face with his character, Coutinho builds a story for two – the voice and the ear commanding in equal parts the narrative –, and there is no way to know its outcome beforehand”¹⁸ – in such a way that, from the partnership that is established between them, it is possible to catch a glimpse of a way out – Fernanda decides to evoke a memory, a personal story, causing a surprising “short circuit” between the emotions from her interpretation and the real feelings of the character Aleta.

Fernanda's testimony reconstitutes a scene that took place in the mythical and religious space of *candomblé* to which she had been taken by an aunt and from where she returned after having lived a cathartic experience of liberation:

¹⁷ In Portuguese: “A diferença é que, com um personagem fictício, se você atinge um nível medíocre você pode até ficar nele, porque ele é da sua medida. Com um personagem real, a realidade um pouco esfrega na sua cara onde você poderia estar e você não chegou... Tem alguém acabado na sua frente. [...] Outras vezes, fazendo ficção, fazendo um personagem que não existe você atinge um grau de realidade, que aquela pessoa passa a existir.”

¹⁸ In Portuguese: “face a face com seu personagem, Coutinho vai construindo uma história a dois – a voz e o ouvido comandando em partes iguais a narrativa –, cujo desfecho não há como conhecer de antemão.”

Then, when I left the *camarinha* [a retreat room used during *candomblé*'s rituals], that night, she was all dressed in white, she was beautiful, then she turned to me and said "It's horrible in there, isn't it?," and I said "auntie, it's horrible, auntie," and she said, "Yeah, Nanda, that's death, that's where you have to get out from." And she said, "come here," she grabbed the dove, and I went outside with her, then she grabbed that dove and I said "Oh auntie, you're not going to kill that dove, right?." Then she turned to me and said, "Me? This dove is you. I'm going to let you go" and *vrummm*, she released that dove and then I understood what *candomblé* was, that was Freud in action, it was something like that. And she cured my melancholy with that. She cured my morbidity of wanting to stay, she named everything. The *camarinha* was death, the dove was me. I got pregnant a month later and my auntie died shortly after that.¹⁹

To the scenography of psychic restoration inferred from Fernanda's account, we can add the mystical aura of Coutinho's welcoming silence when faced with the fragility of the actress' work and, at the same time, the greatness of the human being. Coutinho's sensitive listening involves the interviewee and validates her speech, bringing out from this interaction a subjective instance, a guarantor that assures what is said, without judging whether it is the result of the real or of the staged.

Perhaps, it is Coutinho's priest *ethos*: "The out-of-date glasses, the white hair, the rough yet welcoming voice, the almost permanent invisibility of his figure, it all contributes to give his films a certain resemblance to a confessional session." (Coelho, 2007)²⁰ Perhaps, it is the *ethos* of the psychoanalyst, who "allows an apparently rigid and inviolable situation to prove itself propitious for the miracle to happen, when a person, when confessing or telling a story, invents themselves" (Oricchio, 2007).²¹

The viewer understands that acting is unstable and insecure. The character of opacity of the language developed by the actress is accentuated when, in front of

¹⁹ In Portuguese: "Aí quando eu saí da *camarinha*, daquela noite, ela tava toda vestida de branco, linda, aí ela virou para mim e disse assim "É horrível lá dentro, né?" e eu falei "tia, é horrível tia" e ela disse assim "Pois é, Nanda, aquilo é a morte, é dali que você tem que sair". E ela falou, "vem cá", pegou a pomba e eu fui com ela para o lado de fora, aí ela pegou aquela pomba e eu disse "ai tia, a senhora não vai matar essa pomba, né?" Aí ela virou para mim e falou assim "Eu? Essa pomba é você, eu vou é te soltar" e *vrummm*, soltou aquela pomba e aí eu entendi o que que era *candomblé*, aquilo era Freud na prática, era uma coisa assim. E ela curou a minha melancolia com aquilo. Ela curou a minha morbidez de querer ficar, ela deu nome a tudo. A *camarinha* era a morte, a pomba era eu. Engravidei um mês depois e minha tia morreu um pouco depois daquilo."

²⁰ In Portuguese: "Os óculos fora de moda, o cabelo branco, a voz rugosa e ao mesmo tempo acolhedora, a quase permanente invisibilidade de sua figura, contribuem para dar a seus filmes certa semelhança com uma sessão de confessorário."

²¹ In Portuguese: "permite que uma situação aparentemente rígida e inviolável se mostre propícia para que o milagre possa acontecer, quando uma pessoa, ao confessar ou contar uma história, se invente."

Coutinho, she admits that she does not master “the” meaning of the text she interprets, but only one among several possible meanings and, thus, she exposes herself to the opaque view of the viewer the effect of the interdiscourse, which emerges, in her interpretation, as an “other discourse.”

Conclusions

Among the narrative resources employed by documentarians for the cinematic display of alterity, the interview occupies a prominent place. Eduardo Coutinho uses it as a way to promote an encounter with his characters. In a modest frame, we see the filmmaker talking to ordinary people about their experiences. To do so, he adopts a method that benefits from the body, from speech and from memory, with its intonations, pauses and inaccuracies.

If, on the one hand, it is an apparently simple method when described like that, on the other hand, it is complex, critical, sharp, in relation to the way in which the interview was constituted in the contemporary Brazilian documentary scene, in which the ambiguous imperative of “giving the voice to the other” sets the tone for an enunciation still dominated by the character of the filmmaker (Teixeira, 2003).

In the opposite direction, Coutinho’s documentary invests in “how it is said” more than in “what is said,” in the power of the act of the unique word catalyzed by an encounter. Focusing on the unrepeatable verbal event, the filmmaker undertakes a sensitive listening to the other, mediated by the revelation of the very act of filming in which the interviewer and the interviewees are enrolled, explicitly evidencing their conditions of production.

It is also important to highlight that the speech scenes, when reinforced by a minimal setting, with few elements in the scene, show that it is possible to build a unique experience. In this sense, the presence of a staircase to the empty and dark theater stage symbolically means the characters' asceticism to the experience of full language, to the project of focusing on the word of the other, in its maximum degree of empathy.

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Declaration of Author’s Contribution

Silma Ramos Coimbra Mendes and Maria Cecília Pérez de Souza-e-Silva declare that contributed to the conception and analysis of the intellectual content of approaches developed in the article “Scenography, Setting, and Ethic World in *Jogo em cena: A Discursive Approach*,” in its structuring, writing, critical review and final approval of the version to be published. They are responsible for all aspects of the paper and for the accuracy and integrity of the work.

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Reviews

Review I

The article entitled “Scenography, Setting and Ethical World in *Jogo de cena: a Discursive Approach*,” submitted to the evaluation of *Bakhtiniana*, a Journal of Discourse Studies, brings a pertinent and relevant reflection on the filmic discourse, more specifically, on the generic scene of the documentary. The pertinence and relevance of

the article contribute not only to the field of the discursive studies produced in Brazil, but also to other areas such as that of the audiovisual, and cinema, for instance. The proposed objectives are clear and fully developed throughout the text. The theoretical and methodological framework thoroughly researched elsewhere by Dominique Maingueneau, specifically regarding the conceptual triad - encompassing scene; generic scene and scenography - is very well articulated with the analyses of the documentary *Jogo de cena*, by Eduardo Coutinho. We must also highlight the essential role of scenography, as an analytical apparatus, handled by the authors for the understanding of the interviews that constitute the documentary. The text in question, besides showing that the theoretical and methodological apparatus proposed by Dominique Maingueneau regarding the scene of enunciation is quite fruitful in handling the filmic discourse. Although the author has not postulated these notions from the filmic discourse, it also presents itself as a kind of methodological route to account for the mechanics of the filmic discourse. In other words, the article is also a small map that suggests analytical pathways for those (discourse analysts or not) interested in understanding the mechanics of filmic discourse. ACCEPTED.

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Review II

This is an article that addresses a relevant and current discussion, with the project of suggesting a discursive approach to the language practices involved in the construction of a documentary. That proposal has the merit of precisely seeking to fill a theoretical gap in research on so-called intersemiotic practices, according to D. Maingueneau. Considering that one of the impacts of the discussion for the area lies precisely in this articulation, the aforementioned notion not being mentioned is noteworthy.

In the construction of the research objective, its first formulation in the text is still quite vague: “to reflect on how this interview is constituted” (p.2). However, in the sequence, axes of reflection are presented in p.2 – namely, speech scenes circulated; nature of the interviewer-interviewee relationship; production of settings, scenography and ethical world involved in the interviews conducted by Coutinho –, which offer interesting developments for the theoretical framework indicated.

Those axes are more strongly linked to the formulation of the objective in the abstract: “This article reflects upon these interviews from a discourse perspective based on: (i) speeches related to the aesthetic choices and materiality of the documentary; (ii) the nature of the interviewer-interviewee relationship, marked by the refusal of a supposed neutrality; and (iii) the production of settings, scenographies, and ethical worlds.” As such, a formulation of the objective that incorporates those aspects is necessary.

Regarding the construction of the theoretical framework, the works mentioned by the author are sufficient for an adequate analysis oriented by the suggested objective. Some aspects regarding the presentation of the fundamental ideas handled in the article can be reviewed, about which I discuss below.

On p.9, there is a long quotation about the notion of interdiscourse, followed by comments

that do not produce explicit articulation between that notion and the material under analysis. The words “genre” and “scene” are employed with a certain variation, sometimes as a concept, sometimes as a common vernacular word.

I suggest citing the reference to the definition of interview as “conversation, relationship with the other,” on p.1. The mention of the “documentary genre” indicates the relevance of the notion of discursive genre for the reflection constructed in the text. Therefore, it’s important. There are uses of the word “genre” that seem to refer to a common usage, such as “characterize the tele journalistic and the documentary genres” (p.5). On the other hand, the notion is brought back when the author discusses the scene framework and mentions the generic scene.

From the discursive point of view, the interview constitutes a broad genre, with several subdivisions. There are passages in the text that bring to the fore very important notions that deserve further development. An example of that is the following excerpt: “In this sense, *Jogo de cena* materializes the conditions that allow the destabilization of the regimes of truth with which documentaries work, and it assumes, on the contrary, a different perspective regarding the film editing process” (p.3).

I suggest the revision of the use of the notion of scenography in: “The interviews construct scenographies of intense relationships, painful separations, problems with children, with parents, death, pain and mourning, among other burning issues of human experience which are present in the speech scenes in which the filmmaker is enrolled” (pp.10-11).

In the construction of an analysis methodology, one can notice the recurring employment of considerations based on authors from the field of film studies, which do not address discursivity as it is proposed in the article. These considerations reveal the importance of Eduardo Coutinho’s filmography and support the dialogue between the proposed fields of study. However, I suggest that the author be careful with the use of such references in the discussion of the analyses.

On p.6, there is a discussion about something that seems to refer to a specific example: “Perceiving that there was a special interest in his account, the interviewee made an effort to tell it with vivacity, in a state of co-presence, in which a deep partnership between the interlocutors was registered.” I suggest locating and citing the example.

The table on p.7 seems to suggest an approximation to the verbal-visual textuality in question. A more precise delimitation of the treatment to be given to the highlighted passage, as well as the definition of the analysis categories, are not found. In this context, the notion of scenography, as proposed by Maingueneau, is not fully analyzed.

The indication of an *ethos* is presented, but there is no access to the analysis that led to such consideration. “Coutinho’s *ethos* of welcoming, attention and respect for the speech of his interviewees is the mark of his positioning in the field of documentary and this is what gives him adherence to his discourse” (p.12). This excerpt is a result of analysis. I suggest that the author explains which aspects would have led to such conclusions. This discussion about the *ethos* of the interviewer demands highlighting the proposed changes in the conceptualization at use. In the author’s definition, the *ethos* refers to the self-image constructed by the speaker.

For this reason, the analyses are limited to comments that move between mentioning the notions derived from the discursive approach and making comments based on scholars in

the field of cinema. I suggest the deepening of the systematization of the use of Discourse Analysis concepts in the reflection on the filmic materiality. MANDATORY CORRECTIONS.

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Review III

The submitted article impresses, first of all, for its unique fluidity. The purpose of the article is interesting and its objective, namely, to reflect discursively on the mechanics of the interviews in *Jogo de cena*, by Eduardo Coutinho, based on the theoretical framework proposed by Maingueneau, is carried out in a consistent way and with full theoretical mastery.

I suggest only a small adjustment in the text: on pages 6 and 8-9, there is a repetition of Coutinho's procedure of starting the interview by telling the interviewee that he had access to information and facts about her life. I suggest that in the second time that procedure is mentioned, it should be marked in the text precisely as a resumption and not as new information, in order to avoid the effect of an "inattentive cutting and pasting."

It is an article that contributes to the discursive studies proposed after Maingueneau and it has a productive intertwining with the field of cinema. ACCEPTED.

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Editorial Report IV

Authors are requested to comply with the second reviewer's observations, rewrite the text as needed, and resubmit to the journal by November 5, 2021.

Review Report IV

This article proposes a reflection on filmic materiality, investigating, in this context, the productivity of notions such as setting, scenography and ethical world, derived from the theoretical framework of Discourse Analysis. For this investigation, Eduardo Coutinho's filmography was chosen as the production field of clues for analysis, with emphasis on the work *Jogo de cena*. Regarding those options, it is worth mentioning the fact that the article presents a proposal for research and analysis of intersemiotic materiality, with a relevant contribution to this challenging undertaking. Also noteworthy is the relevance of the concepts chosen for the proposed approach, demonstrating a dialogue with recent elaborations for the field of discursive studies.

Regarding the considerations on the field of film studies, references such as XAVIER (2008), COMOLLI (2008), LINS e MESQUITA (2008), BERNARDET (2003) are mentioned. Aspects of Eduardo Coutinho's film production are also pointed out,

contributing to the construction of an interdisciplinary perspective and to the delimitation of the interest and the problem to be researched, as can be seen in the formulation: “Exploring the similarities and/or resonances that are established between these two fields of knowledge is what we propose to do” (p.9).

Regarding the documentary under analysis, the film *Jogo de cena* is properly situated in the director’s filmography, explaining aspects that are found in its genesis. Such explanation has the merit of organizing the researchers’ work towards the material to be analyzed – a procedure articulated in a productive manner, which resorted to the concepts of an encompassing scene and a generic scene.

In the analyses, the notions of scenography and *ethos* are articulated in a very productive way, explaining the construction of the discursive point of view regarding the work in question. The concept of setting, which has recently systematically entered the theoretical framework of DA, is articulated with those notions. This articulation allows the incorporation of aspects linked to the construction of the space in which the scenes under analysis are filmed. In this regard, the image exhibition of these scenes allows us to highlight the investment in the materiality of intersemiotic nature, which the article proposes to investigate.

For all these reasons, considering the contributions to discursive studies, both from the theoretical point of view and from the point of view of interest in an intersemiotic practice, I recommend the publication of the article. ACCEPTED.

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